

June 9, 2010

Letters to the editor

East Troy Times

To Town of East Troy voters

CRG's comments about our local town board supervisors are absurd! In last week's article, Bret Strong charges that Supervisor Montez "shows a lack of interest for high property assessments, jobs and homes lost to foreclosure." Think how stupid those remarks are.

Property assessments are determined by an independent assessor that follows the guidelines from the Wisconsin Department of Revenue. Comparative market prices drive assessments. My understanding is that market prices nearly match the town's overall assessed values at this time. It will cost town taxpayers about \$40,000 to reassess properties, only to find that a reassessment will have little affect. Check out the Town Hall website and look in the FAQ section <http://www.townofeasttroy.com/faq/>. You'll find a handy property owner's guide that tells the true story about property assessments.

What about jobs? As far as I know, our town government is not in the business of job marketing. The two neighboring villages are zoned for commercial and industry and that seems to work well for us who prefer to live in a rural environment.

And homes lost to foreclosure? That is certainly beyond the scope of local government, let alone for one of three town board members to have any say over banking and real estate issues.

With regards to government policy, aren't all three board members responsible for making policy decisions for the town? Where does the Town Chairman stand on local issues? Nobody knows - he never votes on anything.

And as for spending money, don't you know that we as town electors approve an annual budget that the town board must follow throughout the year? No exceptions are made without public disclosure and Town Board review for dedicated funds.

We have had good government as far back as I can remember, perhaps for over 20 years. Why are things falling apart since Mr. Stoesser took office only last year? Maybe it is due to his complete lack of political credentials and ignorance of how government works, and a strong penchant for mud slinging.

Don't take hearsay for granted. Verify the facts. Don't let Bret Strong of CRG or Mr. Stoesser fool you.

*Allen W. Larson
Town of East Troy*

Town of East Troy citizens attempt to recall chairman, supervisor

Tom McCormack
CORRESPONDENT

Residents from the Town of East Troy are seeking to recall two of its three board members, according to petitions filed at the town hall recently.

Town of East Troy Clerk Kim Buchanan confirmed she accepted recall petitions for Supervisor Clayton Montez and Chairman John Stoesser.

According to Buchanan, both petitions contained more than the 446 signatures required to force a recall vote.

On May 17, Citizens for Responsible Government representative Bret Strong filed the petitions for the recall of Supervisor Montez.

Strong and CRG have charged Montez with a "lack of interest in local issues such as high property assessments, jobs and homes lost to foreclosure," according to a press release submitted by Strong.

The group also claims, "It took a referendum to stop Montez's efforts to take land away from our neighbors," and "we were shocked to find that Montez had allowed the Town to waste nearly \$110,000 on this process."

On June 1, opponents of Chairman John Stoesser filed their petition for recall.

Town Taxpayers for Accountable Government have uploaded a PDF document to the web outlining their reasons for seeking a recall of Stoesser.

The document cites "weak leadership," "opinionated communications," and claims Stoesser "violates state statutes."

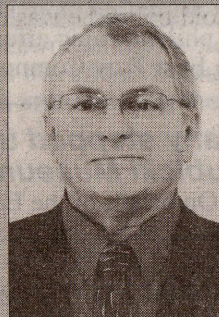
Specifically the group states Stoesser, "Fails fiduciary obligations to pay bills," "Verbally abuses and tries to manipulate town employees," and "Confuses citizens before to authorize tax levy with board responsibilities."

Before the petitions are officially recorded they must be certified for sufficiency, a process where each signature is verified as belonging to a legal resident of the Town of East Troy who is also eligible to vote. Buchanan explained that once the petitions are certified, they can then be brought to the Town Board and a recall election date can be set. Wisconsin Statute requires the vote to take place six Tuesdays after certification is complete.

Montez and Stoesser can challenge the petitions within 10 days of their submission. Supervisor Montez's challenge period has expired without a challenge from him. Chairman Stoesser has until June 11 to rebut the petitions. Chairman Stoesser and Supervisor Montez were not available for comment at press time.



Clayton Montez



John Stoesser

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Why do I not hear these same complaints from the residents of Miramar and the rest of the outlying areas of the township? I have been attending the town board meetings for some time and have not witnessed the Town Chairman causing strife or discord at the meetings. To the contrary, I have observed that he has a rather quiet and reserved demeanor during the meetings. In fact, I have not witnessed any disruptive activity from Mr. Bret Strong or the CRG group. I have observed disruptive behavior from the Beulah Lake contingent that seems to have a rather suspicious alignment with town supervisors and the town clerk.

Mr. Larson brought up the subject of tax assessments. He believes that property reassessments are not necessary and that it would cost the township an estimated cost of \$40,000 to complete the reassessments. The town supervisors squandered \$110,000 of taxpayers' money for the Park Trail and yet that doesn't seem to be an issue. But spending \$40,000 causes much concern to ardent supporters of the town supervisors. Why are they so adamant about avoiding reassessment?

Many of these lakefront residents reside in homes that most township residents would never hope to afford, and there may lie the reason for them to be fighting reassessment.

We have heard at the town board meetings that the town assessor stated that the assessments may be too high, but not high enough to pursue reassessment. Property values have dropped dramatically and that may cause financial stress for property owners of modest homes and income. Those who enjoy more extravagant

the higher home value and income helps insulate these residents from the burden that these conditions inflict on residents of modest homes and income.

Mr. Larson refers to the taxation guide that is available on the town website. Section four of that guide may shed some light on the argument of reassessment. We must also ask the question whether the tax burden is fairly levied on all properties? Judging by the outcry of some Beulah Lake residents against reassessment I might be inclined to believe that even though they pay taxes that I could never begin to afford, it may be the more modest properties are carrying a somewhat disproportionate percentage of the tax levy. The tax guide Mr. Larson mentioned works as long as each property stays even and has a proper assessment.

If the taxes on a modest home are \$300 too high, that \$300 adds up on a yearly basis until 10 years down the timeline the resident has paid excess that may be equivalent to an entire year of property tax. Does anyone out there find this appealing?

I ask, who do we trust in this scenario? We must act and verify by reassessment of all property in the township. Property owners on all levels will benefit from an accurate and proportional assessment, especially since property values have dropped so dramatically.

Mr. Larson claims that the town board is "falling apart" because of John Stoesser. The town board isn't having difficulties because of Mr. Stoesser. The problem lies in the lack of acceptance of Mr. Stoesser as Chairman by the rest of the board and the town clerk.

The residents voted out Mr. Mueller and seated Mr. Stoesser and the rest of the board must accept that fact.

What a sad scenario! I cannot envision the residents continuing to tolerate such a diminutive mindset acting as town leadership. We shall see what transpires in the next town election. Change is coming.

*Dan Andritsch
East Troy*

Editor's note: This letter

for teens. Movies must be directed, filmed and edited by teens, ages 12-19. Each filmmaker may submit up to and no more, than two films.

Films may be on any topic, but must be G or PG rated in language and subject matter or they will be disqualified. All editing must be done before submitting the film. Title pages and credits should be included in the film and they must be in DVD format. Submit your edited films to the East Troy Lions Public Library by Sept. 1 with a completed entry form.

Must-reads

"He Walked Among Us" is the latest science fiction novel by author Norman Spinrad. When erstwhile talent agent Jimmy Balaban discovers Rafe, an ad-lib comic,

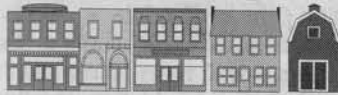
only problem is Rafe truly believes he is a prophet.

In "Band of Angels," Julia Greason takes readers on a journey into the heart of the Crimean War. As a child in Wales, Catherine Carreg is permitted a great deal of freedom. Her favorite companion is a local drover boy, Deio. That is until local gossip forces her to end the relationship.

When her mother dies in childbirth, Catherine, with the Deio's help flees to London where she lands a job in Florence Nightingale's home for sick governesses. As she becomes proficient in her nursing skills, she volunteers as a nurse in the Crimea.

Deio had enlisted in the army and was a soldier. A reunion after the long months of war challenges their love.

East Troy Times



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To Town of East Troy voters

It's unfortunate that Allen Larson tried to twist words around to protect the fumbling of Supervisor Montez and Klarkowski.

Let's talk about assessments. Back a few years ago when we were reassessed, the firm that the town uses had me at \$259,000. I said no way and went to the "open book" meeting to protest. They then dropped me to \$244,000. Again, I said they were crazy. I was told that it would not be lowered anymore, as this was the value of my home. I went and hired my own assessor (which you can do) and they had excellent comparables and had me at \$209,000. This is what I had expected to see based on my research.

I turned this over to the board for review and was shocked to hear Supervisor Montez ask me if I really went and hired my own assessor. I believe that to be a pretty stupid question. Go figure. Now based on a \$50,000 savings, times five years between assessments, that \$250,000 I will not be paying tax on. Not bad for a mere \$300 to pay for my own assessment.

So here is a question for you people in the township: how many of you are in the same position - over assessed! Mr. Larson says it won't make a difference. I beg to differ.

As far as I go, I never said the town created jobs. My statement is that we have a great deal of people out of work and can't afford more taxes. I was and still can be one of them. I was laid off for five months and I am running a very tight ship right now. I don't want more taxes to bog me down. I want my home and I don't want some moron deciding to raise my taxes or give me an assessment that is out of line.

As for government policy, yes it does take three board members to make policy

decisions for the town. Too bad Montez and Klarkowski make all the decisions in the town. They make up the majority for a vote so it doesn't make a difference how Mr. Stoesser votes. If he feels he has an issue with the vote, he will abstain. There is no law against this. Nice try Mr. Larson. As far as good government goes, I guess when you're on the side of the good 'ol boys club, you don't see what us peasants see. A good number of members of CRG have been attending the monthly meetings and are absolutely appalled as to what is going on. Supervisor Montez and Klarkowski, along with their counterpart Clerk/Treasurer Buchanan have done everything in their power to make Chairman Stoesser's job impossible. We have witnesses. Maybe we should pull public record of the tapes of the meetings and have a public meeting to have the people listen to them. Oh wait, the good 'ol boys won't give us public records (which is required by law if requested). They deny us. They must be above the law.

In closing, I want to let the people of the Town of East Troy know that Citizens for Responsible Government is a fact based honest organization. We are in most of the counties in the state. We bring you, the people, information that our politicians won't give out or hide. We believe in open honest government that works for the people not themselves. We will remove those that are not doing their job. We have an excellent record of it. We need to support Chairman Stoesser and get Montez out of office and replace him with someone who cares as much as Chairman Stoesser and expose the shenanigans that are running rampant in the town. Hold on tight, it's going to happen!

Bret Strong
CRG Walworth County

Loomis-Martin American Legion Post 188 recognized Flag Day by performing the Disposal of Unserviceable Flags at Booth Lake Memorial Park. Each Saturday the Post

Where in the world is the East Troy Times?



PHOTO SUBMITTED East Troy Times

A group of friends took the East Troy Times back to the '50s and '60s right in East Troy when they attended the "Malt Shop Memories" musical performance presented by the Mukwonago Village Players at Ivan's Backstage in May. Pictured (from left) are: Dorothy Neldner, Bonnie Senft, Roberta Zess, Connie Greeson, Jackie Hahlbeck and Anna Robertson.

You're invited to submit a picture showing where you traveled with your hometown newspaper. Submit your photo to East Troy Times, 2888 Main St., P.O. Box 274, East Troy, WI 53120 or Editor@EastTroyTimes.net.

It's your library ... check it out

Submitted by Jackie Gotz, East Troy Public Library Director

The first performance in the StoryWagon series for 2010 is "Uncle Mike's Pint-Sized Polkas." Join Uncle Mike at the East Troy Lions Public Library on Monday, June 21 at 1:30 p.m. for Pint-Size Polkas.

Bring the kids for some great fun and education on topics like the alphabet, numbers, occupations, geography and so much more. Plus, have a great time moving around to Uncle Mike's happy polka beat of great songs like "Alphabet Polka," "Numbers Schottische" and "Tiny Bubbles in the Tub."

he feels his problems are over. Rafe claims to be from the future where the physical world is completely broken down and the last of stalwart humanity has taken refuge in pressurized shopping malls where they are desperately clinging to life on a dead planet.

Ralf is a prophet from the future sent to deliver the message that it might not be too late to save the world. When Dexter D. Lampkin, a fading science fiction



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Dan Andritsch
East Troy

Editor's note: This letter

Town Supervisor appeals for honesty

I am responding to Mr. Bret Strong's published remarks that I admonished him from bringing a hired appraiser to last year's Board of Review.

Mr. Strong writes in last week's letter to the editor, "I was astonished to hear Supervisor Montez ask me if I really went and hired my own assessor."

I could not have said what he wrote because I was excused from last year's Board of Review due to illness. The recorded minutes of the BOR would show that I was not available to have said anything to Mr. Strong.

Here is a brief explanation about the Board of Review process:

Under state law, the town assessor's opinion is presumed correct unless factual information provided by the petitioner shows otherwise. The information comes from documentation of recent sales of comparable properties that is usually attested to by a realtor or an appraiser on behalf of the petitioner.

Mr. Strong followed proper procedure by hiring an independent appraiser to support his opinion and the town board respects that right.

The Board of Review cannot override the town assessor's opinion with an arbitrary adjustment.

All of the board members undergo training and certification to state standards to ensure that the Board of Review functions equitably. If a petitioner feels that the review process did not go according to state defined rules, the petitioner has the right to appeal the process through circuit court and the Department of Revenue. If Mr. Strong felt the procedure was flawed, he could have appealed his case.

As for Mr. Strong's other comments, it is Mr. Stoesser and Mr. Strong who have been deceiving the public. They are attempting to discredit Supervisor Klarkowski and me with distorted opinions about local government affairs. In my opinion, they would like to see us removed from office so

they can manipulate town affairs according to a personal agenda of power as Mr. Stoesser has tried throughout this past year.

The truth about local government affairs can usually be found by requesting the information from the town clerk where all town government activities are recorded and are available for public view. A visit to the Town's website may also help you: www.townofeastroy.com.

I have been on the town board for 18 years, served on various town, county and state committees, and have a clean record for promoting honest government. I have no need or desire to deceive the community that I am proud to serve. And if I am guilty of anything, it is for privately and publicly correcting Mr. Stoesser for his gross mismanagement of town affairs.

One example of the chairman's poor handling of his duties can be discerned by the following quote from the Town's auditor representing Baker Tilly, "We encountered no significant difficulties in dealing with management (town clerk) in performing and completing our audit except that we were unable to obtain all required representations from the town chairman." (See Town webpage for introduction letter by Baker Tilly representative: www.townofeastroy.com/budget/.)

The town auditor's comment illustrates that Mr. Stoesser has misrepresented our town by blocking information that would expose his tricks to disrupt the auditor's evaluation of town operations. Our town government has received excellent ratings during the past two decades, as well as for this past year, in spite of the town chairman's documented meddling to sabotage the town's standing (March 8, 2010 Town Board Meeting).

I hope Mr. Stoesser and Mr. Strong take heed and stop hurting our town with their deceptions. A welcome change would be to restore our local government to the integrity it had before Stoesser took office as board chairman.

*Clayton Montez, MA
Supervisor, Town of East Troy*

Determine your future July 27

Tuesday, July 27 may be the most important local election we have ever participated in. It has the potential to affect all of us in profound ways. At stake is the power of a select few vs. the rights of the Town majority. Essentially, it boils down to perpetuating the "old regime" or supporting better representation of all Town residents. When casting your vote, please consider current events and perhaps forgotten, but never the less significant, past history: our property assessments and decisions that led up to attempts to take land for the "Park Trail"; the destruction of the home of an 80-year-old veteran.

Regarding our property assessments: Why hasn't the "old guard" been willing to let voters decide, at the polling place, about reevaluating their high property assessments? Does the "old guard" think they know what is best for everyone?

Has the governing process reached a point where the general public is not made aware of events until the decision-making is a done deal?

We need to know what factors led to such an aggressive move as attempting to take land from Town residents by eminent domain, causing families to spend huge amounts of money to defend their homes/land.

Why was more than \$110,000 of Town money spent without our knowledge? (The \$110,000 figure was disclosed by the Town clerk at the "Park Trail" forum shortly before the April 2010 election.)

The razing of the Kasun home is another

example. There were a series of systematic decisions that led to the taking of the home from 80-year-old war veteran, Tom Kasun. Mr. Kasun had built his home by hand in the 1960s. Maybe we should all listen to the recording of the Jan. 24, 2007, Special Meeting where the Town Board discusses how they will add any extra costs to Mr. Kasun's tax bill. A prominent Town Supervisor can be heard making humorous comments about this very serious subject. Subsequently, it was the Town's special charges added to his tax bill that caused Mr. Kasun to lose his land also. Were there better options to depleting this man's resources and then condemning his home and land? We need to insure that another Kasun or "Park Trail" never happens again.

As a footnote, some months back, there was an effort to destroy all the Town meeting tape recordings. I've managed to stop the destruction, temporarily. As a result, I had an inventory taken of these recordings. However, I do not have the final authority to prevent this loss of our Town history.

The point of all this is that we need to stay vigilant when it comes to our government. Not a simple task.

On July 27, it will boil down to choosing between the policies of the "old incumbents," or making changes that remove the Town's ability to act unseen.

On July 27, the Town's future will be in your hands.

*John Stoesser
Chairperson, Town of East Troy*

invitation to join us in the East Troy's annual July 4th parade, Sunday July 4. No organization affiliation required. You've already earned your qualification. We meet in the Caremore Car Center/Gus's Drive-in parking lot. We have a tractor/trailer provided by James Bolton Farms.

travel starts getting a bit more difficult after that. Thank you for your service, welcome home and hope to see you there.

*John Kreidler, Commander
VFW Post 7501
East Troy*